



THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF HADDONFIELD

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343 King's Highway, East

May 1975

FIRE! FIRE!

WORDS THAT START MEN IN MOTION

Air, fire and water—these were the elements regarded by ancient and medieval cosmologies as the fundamental ingredients of the universe. The next Society program will focus on one of these elements—Fire.

Even today, although fire has been described in the uncompromising language of science, it still retains some of its mystical connotations—the flame of the Olympics, the use of candles in religious services, and even dinner by candlelight with its romantic nuances. Fires—far more dangerous, bring to the scene fascinated onlookers who often hinder the work of the firemen. If further evidence of the powerful attraction of fire is needed, just look at the soaring sales of "The Towering Inferno," describing a holocaust in a modern skyscraper.

When fire lost its divine connotation and was recognized as the destructive force it is, measures were taken to smother, halt or at least contain its rapid spread. Men formed groups to help each other; specialized equipment was devised, and the city planners of the times dug wells in accessible locations.

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NEXT MEETING

Date: May 27, 1975

Place: Friends' Meeting House
Friends Ave. & Lake St.

Time: 8:00 P.M.

Light Refreshments

THE PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Mrs. Ruby Oberst, Mrs. Stephen Snodgrass, Mrs. Elwood Hess and Mrs. James Lennon and their Committees are to be commended on the recent extremely successful events at Greenfield Hall. The Tea and 1875 Exhibit on Heritage Day of the Borough were enthusiastically received.

The German poet, Goethe, said: "The best thing which we derive from history is the enthusiasm that it raises in us." Our Society, as it preserves and records history, is motivated by the enthusiasm of the membership. It is greatly appreciated and hopefully it will continue in the future.

WHEN THE DOOR OPENS, OPPORTUNITY ENTERS

When a hostess at Greenfield Hall responds to the imperious summons of the door bell, she has no idea when she opens the door of what adventure lies ahead. Sometimes the caller wants to buy a fraktur or a plate or look up source material in the library or to see the doll collection or the tools or sometimes just to see "the inside of a historical society." Occasionally the caller has a special mission.

Late in January, on a day when only people who had ventured outside, the visitor at the door was from the Penn Mutual Life Insurance Company on Independence Square. Her quest was for domestic articles, clothing or tools, which could be used in a series of special exhibits planned for the opening of the Company's new observation deck, scheduled for June. Not expecting to find too much, our guest was surprised at the quality and variety of the Society's collections and felt that a return visit, with another colleague, was in order.

The second visit was on a day more disagreeable, if possible, than the first. The building, even with the heat turned up to 68°, was frigid. Perhaps the joy of discovery kept the Penn Mutual representatives warm for they compiled a list of clothing and tools which they felt would be of interest to visitors to the observation deck. This list was formally presented to the Society's Board for approval. Such approval was voted, with the understanding that Penn Mutual will insure each article, provide protection and proper housing and give recognition to the Society as the source of the articles on loan.

Penn Mutual's display designer, Gerald Nash, recently spent an afternoon at Greenfield Hall examining the articles and taking measurements before beginning to design an appropriate setting for them.

This summer when taking friends to visit historic sites in Philadelphia, stop in at the Penn Mutual observation deck and see a bit of Haddonfield in Philadelphia.

FOR NEW MEMBERS— A BICENTENNIAL BONUS

Mrs. Edward E. Krauss, Jr., Society vice president and membership chairman, told of a plan, approved by the Board, to stimulate efforts to increase membership.

New members joining between May and October this year will not be billed again until October 1976. "Between now and October, we are in effect offering one to four months' membership as a gift," says Mrs. Krauss, "and we hope present members will make use of this attractive feature when inviting friends and neighbors to join the Society."

In talking about membership, Mrs. Krauss was particularly gratified by the response to her suggestion that anyone wishing to sponsor a new member send the name to her and, as she says "The Membership Committee will follow through."

The Society, as guardian of priceless gifts of furniture, manuscripts, clothing and other articles related to the development of Haddonfield, plans to participate actively in Bicentennial events. Even while developing special programs for the Bicentennial, the Society must still maintain the collections it already has and make them available to the community. For an organization totally dependent on volunteers, this is no easy assignment, but there are encouraging signs that it can be done. "We are so pleased with our new members, their interest, eagerness to become involved and desire to learn more about our heritage," says Mrs. Krauss, "I hope our Bicentennial Bonus Program will be an incentive for other interested and enthusiastic people to join."

TEA, TRIFLES AND TREASURES

Doesn't that collection of "T's" have a lilt to it? Can you imagine what it alludes to?

Surely, only one guess was necessary! "Tea, Trifles and Treasures" is the theme of the 13th Annual Village Fair sponsored by the Woman's Committee, to be held Saturday, June 7th, on the Society's grounds.

If 13 has any significance as an unlucky number, it has already used up its unwelcome powers. A succession of clammy, rainy days has prevented the women from getting into the garage to start sorting and pricing the assortment of items which has been trickling in since the beginning of the year. Says Ruby Oberst, chairman of the Woman's Committee, "What we need now is a flood of donations; we've had enough heavenly water."

Whether women are working in the garage or not, hostesses on duty at Greenfield Hall on Tuesday or Thursday afternoons will be glad to accept donations of white elephants, jewelry, china, crystal, household articles, linens, books—almost anything except clothing. When the warm weather comes—as it surely will—the garage will be open several days a week.

How "Tea, Trifles and Treasures" will be translated into attractive visual markers will be seen on Fair Day. Meanwhile, the Woman's Committee extends a cordial invitation to members of the Society to join them at their work sessions. Bring a sandwich; tea, properly brewed, is provided, as is good companionship and a sense of working together for a good end.

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Informal neighborhood arrangements became volunteer companies—each with its own firemark, its own distinctive markings on helmets and equipment; its own traditions; and, as they worked together, a social life.

One of the oldest fire companies in continuous existence is Haddonfield's own Fire Co. #1. Founded in 1764, it was then known as the Friendship Fire Company; in May, 1811, the name was changed to the Fire Company of Haddonfield, and by February 1812, the minutes record the name Haddonfield Fire Company.

Passing by the fire house today, one sees a gleaming array of shining red engines—their brass and steel fixtures mirror brilliant. It was not always so.

At the May meeting, Society members will step back in time to see the Friendship Fire Company in action. One frosty September morning, Haddonfield men, women and children, in colonial dress, gathered at the Friends' Meeting grounds to lend atmosphere, they thought, to a filming by Andre de la Varre of 18th century fire fighting techniques. It was too cold just to stand and watch, and there was much to do. A bucket brigade was formed; great clouds of smoke were generated; the venerable 1738 Perkins Hand Pump, manned by the men of the Fire Company was tested; and several "dry runs" were made.

Tension began to mount as the fire was started and burst into angry flame. Water-filled buckets literally flew to the scene, the pumper directed a strong stream of water at the flaming building . . .

What happened—will be seen in this unedited version taken by Mr. de la Varre and given to the Fire Company.

Slides taken by Fire Company historian Walter Prigge will be shown, and Robert Shreeve will relate some of the unexpected hazards and pleasures of fire fighting in the 20th century. A display of artifacts from the Fire Company Museum and the Society's collection will provide an authentic background. According to Mrs. William E. Moody, program chairman, "The only thing missing will be a fire, and we certainly don't want that!"

Historical Society of Haddonfield

Haddonfield, New Jersey

Non-Profit Organization

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THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF HADDONFIELD

EXHIBITS

Encouraged by the response to the "Open House at Greenfield Hall" Exhibits Chairman Diane Snodgrass and her committee are planning two more special exhibits.

One, a fashion show, featuring Society gowns modelled by "skinny high school students," will be held during the formal luncheon on Historic Village Fair Day. Soon the normal quiet of Greenfield Hall will be enlivened with giggles, laughter and groans as the girls try on gowns from another era.

In September or October, the Committee plans a Children's Show which will embrace all the elements of a child's world—from dress to toys. The Society has an extensive, but little known, collection of infant's clothing and some charming children's dresses and coats. Regretably, there is no doll house and just a few doll house furnishings. The collection of toys, too, while of good quality, is very small. Should a member wish to share a personal or family treasure, arrangements may be made with Mrs. Snodgrass.

The imagination and spirit so evident at the Heritage Day "Open House" deserves an encore.

LOUIS F. MACK

When Mr. Mack accepted Mrs. Haydock's invitation to serve on the Documents Research section of the History Book Committee, he revised his weekly schedule to include one afternoon at the Historical Society. His special assignment was, in Mrs. Haydock's words, "to translate" the legal language of early 18th century deeds, indentures and other documents. Anyone familiar with the size of these documents, the faded, often almost indecipherable penmanship, knows the demanding nature of the task Mr. Mack undertook. Once having started, Mr. Mack continued with rare persistence and quiet determination. A quiet and gentle man, Mr. Mack earned the respect and admiration of all those in the library who worked with him.

It is the hope of the History Book Committee that another member of the Society will want to continue the important work so ably started by Mr. Mack.

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DATE TO REMEMBER:

JUNE 7, 1975

HISTORIC VILLAGE FAIR